

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-15 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to clarify that an optical fiber is not being claimed, only the device for removing an outer layer of the optical fiber is being claimed. No claims have been amended to overcome prior art or to narrow the claim breadth. No new matter has been added. Thus, the full doctrine of equivalents applies to each claim limitation.

Basis for new claims 13 and 14 can be found in the originally filed application, including at Figs. 1 and 8 which shows that the cutting blade is parallel to the receiver body throughout the opening and closing motion of the device.

Basis for new claim 14 can be found in the originally filed application including at original claim 1. No new matter has been added.

The objection to the specification is obviated by the amendment to specification set forth above. The specification has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. No new matter has been added. Withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

The objection to claims 1-6 and 8-12 is obviated by the amendments set forth above. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claims 1-6 and 8-12 is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 1-12 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-12 of U.S. Patent No. 6,754,960 is obviated by the filed herewith terminal disclaimer. Accordingly, withdrawal of the obviousness-type double patenting rejection is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over U.S. Patent No. 4,059,892 (Siden) is respectfully traversed. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-12 are not obvious over Siden for the following reasons.

The claimed invention is a device for removing the covering layer of an optical fiber. Optical fibers are formed from glass. In contrast, Siden teaches a device for

removing insulation from a metal wire that conducts electricity. There is a vast difference between devices used for stripping insulation (Siden) and devices for stripping the covering layer of an optical fiber. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to look to wire stripping device (Siden) to make a device for removing the outer layer of an optical fiber.

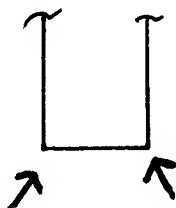
The claimed cutting blades are very different from the cutting blades in Siden. Siden's cutting blades taper down to a sharp edge, which would damage a glass optical fiber. See column 3, lines 21-34 of Siden, which clearly teaches that blades 24 and 26 taper to a sharp edge. Blade 34 of Fig. 5 also tapers to a sharp edge as shown by the side view of blade 34 in Fig. 4. This sharp edge in Siden is used to strip electrical wires, and would damage an optical glass fiber.

Siden specifically teaches that the taper angle is less than 65° , preferably between 15° and 45° . "Greater angles ... have a tendency to bend away upon pulling of the wire, resulting in poor or no stripping of the wire." See column 3, lines 23-28. Thus, Siden strongly teaches away from taper angles greater than 65° .

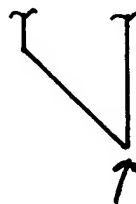
In contrast, the cutting blades in the present invention do not have a taper to sharp point, i.e. the edge angle is substantially 90° . Siden clearly teaches away from using an edge angle of 90° , as discussed above since it would not strip a metal wire.

As recited in the pending claims, "said cutting blade has an edge surface substantially perpendicular to side surfaces of the cutting blade." The "side surfaces" of the blade are the front and back surfaces. The claimed blade surface is substantially flat, not tapered to a point, i.e. the edge angle is substantially 90° . See the blade surface 6 shown in Figs. 5, 11, and 15-19 of the present application, which shows no tapering to a sharp point. The edge surface is substantially flat. For this reason alone, the Section 103 rejection should be withdrawn.

Present Invention



Siden



On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner admits that Siden does not teach the claimed thickness and elasticity range. Applicant respectfully submits that a person of ordinary skill in the art could not learn the claimed thickness and elasticity range, that is suitable for stripping a covering layer from an optical fiber, from a reference (Siden) which only teaches stripping insulation from an electrical wire. From page 5, lines 1-4 of the present specification, the claimed elasticity range provides the combination of easily cutting into the outer layer and avoiding scratching of the underlying optical glass fiber. Such a skilled person would not use a wire stripper for stripping electrical wire to now remove an outer layer of an optical fiber. Furthermore, wire strippers do not inherently teach the claimed pressure range to provide easy cutting into the outer layer in combination with avoidance of scratching an optical glass fiber. For this reason alone, the claimed thickness and elasticity range cannot be obvious from Siden and the Section 103 rejection should be withdrawn.

Furthermore, Siden does not teach using a receiver body "sized such that when an optical fiber is set on a surface of said receiver body opposite to said cutting blade the length of the optical fiber is longer than the thickness of said cutting blade." Siden does not teach using optical fiber so it cannot possibly teach sizing the receiver body in such a manner. For this reason alone, the Section 103 rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 3 and 4 recite guide means for guiding an optical fiber to a removing position. Siden does not teach or even suggest any guide means, and surely not a guide means for guiding optical fiber. For this reason alone, the Section 103 rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 5 recites that the cutting blade has a thickness in the range of 0.06 to 1 mm. Siden does not teach using a blade having this thickness.

In view of the differences between the claimed invention and Siden, withdrawal of the Section 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

In new claims 13 and 14, the blade maintains a parallel configuration in relation to the receiver body throughout the opening and closing motion. In contrast,

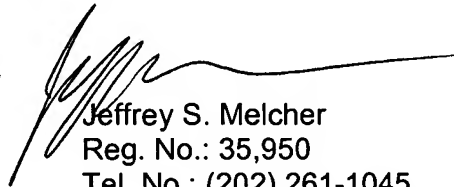
in Siden the blade rotates away from the anvil 32 (Figs. 1 and 5) during opening, thus changing the angle between them. For this reason alone, claims 13 and 14 are not obvious from Siden.

New claim 15 recites the method step of removing an outer layer of an optical fiber. Siden only teaches stripping an insulation from an electrical wire. One of ordinary skill in the art would not use a wire stripper to remove an outer layer of an optical fiber. For this reason alone, claim 15 cannot be obvious from Siden.

In view of all of the objections of record having been addressed, Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance and Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Manelli Denison & Selter PLLC

By



Jeffrey S. Melcher

Reg. No.: 35,950

Tel. No.: (202) 261-1045

Fax. No.: (202) 887-0336

Customer No. 20736